●756 Masai FL12

[Information on Masai medicine men and their primarily divinatory functions in the society will be found in category 791.]

the Central Council being the Appeal Court. In the thirties, the 648
system was again modified, and there are now two regularly consti- 642
tuted tribunals in each of the two Kenya Districts, Narok and 175
Kajiado, in the Masai reserve, and an Appeal Tribunal in each district. It Tanganyika changes came later. Only in 1938 the Paramount Chief was abolished and a new system introduced. There is now a Masai Council, acting as the Appeal Court from the six Local Courts established under the authority of a Headman. Lord **Hailey**, commenting on the Tanganyika system, [illegible]emarks that “ the whole of the juridical organisation seems o[illegible]ntative basis, and in practice it functions irregularly, owin[illegible] nomadic habits of the people ”. This is more or less true [illegible]enya. It is a fact that, in Kenya and Tanganyika, the M[illegible]ver accepted the authority of the *laibon* or prophet in terms of Paramount Chief, and that they dislike the idea of a formally established court. [24] Nomadism, as Lord **Hailey** points out, has much to do with this attitude of the Masai, but it is their social structure which has no place for
such institutions. Whatever political authority exists among the [561]
Nasai, it is established on the structural basis of the age-system.
This system has a dynamic character which can hardly be reconciled with the rigidity of any administrative system imposed from above by the Governement.

The institution of the Masai prophet has been described by 756
Fosbrooke, p. 13. He distinguishes three types of *laibon*. “ First there is the private practitioner who, for suitable remunerations, will perform such service as curing sickness, removing barrenness and ensuring fidelity in wives. He is only consulted by individual
patients. The next stage is when a private practitioner has acquired 756
such a reputation that he is consulted by a deputation on behalf 791
of a group of Masai, and provides charms and lays down a ceremonial to be utilized to the advantage of the whole group. Such prac-

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[24] Writing of the Native Authority System in Kenya after 1918, Lord **Hailey** says in *Native Administration in the British African Territories*. Part I — *East Africa: Uganda, Kenya, Tanganyika*, London 1950, p. 171, “ these Tribunal were not generally recognized by the Masai who preferred that such issues as arose between them should be settled in the customary manner by the Headman or Elders ”. And with regard to the new development he notes, p. 175, that “ the preference for referring cases to the arbitration of local headmen or elders persists ’,. He makes a similar comment for Tanganyika on p. 294: “ in the Masai District the majority of the issues arising between the tribesmen are settled by arbitration ”.

756 791 tices are alleged to be efficacious for the above-mentioned complaints, and may also prove useful in procuring success in war, adequate rainfall, or immunity from disease, both human and bovine. Such a laibon of course retains his private practice. The final stage is when a laibon is invited to superintend and bless ceremonials affecting the whole tribe, such as circumcision, promotion of warriors, standing down, etc. Such a one retains the duties of the two previous stages, and is in fact the Chief Medicine Man of the section or tribe. This is the status which the term laibon popularly connotes. " Therefore, it is clear first that the prophet is essentially a private practictioner, and secondly that his promotion to the higher stages of the practice derive primarily from his personal skill and good luck which give him reputation and, hence, influence on tribal matters. It is significant, however, that the prophet, even when he has reached the highest stage " retains the duties of the two previous stages ", in other words, he does not cease to be a private practitioner. Therefore, the title " Chief which FOSBROOKE also uses, does not properly describe the prophet's office and makes it Medicine Man ", more formal than it really is. [33] It is for the same over-formalisation that our early authorities and the Administration were misled in the evaluation of the prophet institution. [34]

III - PRELIMINARIES TO THE INSTITUTION OF THE AGE-CLASS

561 The age-system of the Masai consists essentially in a structure of age-classes distinguished from one another in terms of seniority. An age-class is instituted as the final result of a long course of initiation ceremonies, performed during an official approved time.

The age-class must be distinguished from other minor groups such as the age-units. These are formed at different stages of the initiation course as intermediate steps to the establishment of the age-class. The age-class follows from the merging and unification of two age-units.

The Masai term for age-class is *old aje*, pl. *il ajijik*; for age-unit, *ol poror*, pl. *il poror*. [35] These terms are frequently rendered into

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[114] [33] Indeed FOSBROOKE is unable to decide wether the laibon is the chief medicine man of the section or tribe.

[34] See also below, and on the relationship of the prophetinstitution to the structure of the age-system as a whole see BERNARDI, l. c., pp. 223, 231.

[35] MERKER, l. c., pp. 70 ss.; HOLLIS, l. c., pp. 122, 261 ss.; LEAKEY, l. c., pp. 191 ss.; FOX, l. c., p. 449; FOSBROOKE, l. c., p. 28.

/21 cont./
791 rises, goes toward him, and, with the customary greeting, extends
576 his hand to him, whereby, not this, but the wrist is grasped. After
609 the concluded discussion, for which there are no particular formalities, he takes his leave with the ordinary farewell.

791 In the way of food, the ol oiboni takes only goat liver roasted
789 on the fire, milk, and honey, for, through any other food, "he
[262] would suffer the loss of the capacity for prophecy and the preparation of efficacious magic charms." Of these arts very little is
[173] supposed to have been handed down to his son Lenana and still less to Zendeo, through which it is all the more explicable that the /22/ Masai today tell of hundreds of different kinds of miracles that Mbatyan allegedly performed. According to them, he could fell large trees by sheer will power, or he had the hut in which he was to be found set afire by his attendant, and, after it had burned down, he appeared, uninjured, out of the ashes.

From the En gidoñ lineage there are further supplied, as has
• 756 already been mentioned, the sorcerers or medicine men (ol goiatiki,
[613] el goiatek), several of whom live in each district. Their office, too, is handed down from father to son, who, however, is usually initiated into the whole secret art only after his marriage. The
[789] most important magic charm in the life of the Masai, the war medicine, the ol goiatiki does not know how to make. Rather, one turns to him only in cases of illness of human beings and livestock for which the well-known remedies fail, or which one traces back to the sorcery of evil neighbors, as well as to determine unknown wrongdoers (thieves, murderers, etc.).

613 The lineage of the El kiboroñ of the El mólleljan tribe, who,
[776] according to the view of all the people, are especially favored by 'Ng ai, the god of the Masai, which has made them primarily the bearers of the religious traditions, require a special discussion.
613 Corresponding to their position with 'Ng ai, they are distinguished
157 by a relative peaceableness. The young warriors, to be sure, also set out on raiding expeditions with the other lineages, but they thereby seem to avoid any unnecessary roughness or brutality, in which the others often compete. The passion for disputes, quarrels, and vituperation, a prominent trait in the character of the young

12;Dundas G-5 (ca. 1900) 1908 FL6 Dorobo FL6
KIKUYU FL10
MASAI FL19

seen amongst them, and it is not difficult with a little practice to tell the particular division to which a Kikuyu belongs. Thus the people of Iriaini* have pronounced Masai features, and many of their chiefs are pure or half Masai by birth. This is due to the fact that when the Kikuyu invaded that district about forty years ago they found it occupied by the remnants of the Alkipiak and Dalalekutuk Masai, who owing to famines, raids, and other causes were too much weakened to resist them. The two tribes therefore settled down peaceably side by side, and by intermarrying formed one people.

Again, many of the Kikuyu clans claim descent from certain particular tribes; thus, the Anjiro and Chakamuyu clans say they are descended from the Shaka, the Akkachiko and Achera from the Kamba, the Aonaka from the Chaga of Kilimanjaro. Anyone enquiring into the descent of those present at a meeting of Kikuyu elders will find an extraordinary number of different tribes represented. One is a Meru, another a Chaga, a third a Masai, a fourth a Shaka, a fifth a Dorobo, and so on.

The actual Kikuyu themselves are said to have come from two tribes called the Shagishu and Ngembe, both of which still exist as tribes somewhere beyond the Meru country, north of Mount Kenia.

I cannot speak from experience of the Shagishu, but I have met a native of Ngembe whose appearance reminded me strongly of a Kikuyu. This man, who said he had never seen a white man before, told me that his country lay beyond Meru and that he had come here to visit relatives. These same Ngembe are believed to have been originally Dorobo, and Karuri, one of the paramount chiefs of the Kikuyu, who is himself a Dorobo, claims descent from them. The Ngembe of the present day are probably analogous to the Kikuyu, *i.e.*, they are a mixture of Dorobo and some other tribe or tribes.

Many absolutely foreign tribes have had colonies in Kikuyu for shorter or longer periods. A tribe of coast people called Digo are stated to have lived for many years on the Tana River, in what is now known as the Fort Hall District.† Somali, Galla, Borana, or some other similar people effected a very strong footing in Kikuyu some fifty to seventy years ago. According to tradition they belonged to the Barabio Lokulala, Sigirai, and Endaramanoni clans,‡ and they had settlements at Nyeri, Naivasha, Kijabe, Punda Milia, and generally all over the Kikuyu country.

In those days the Alkipiak Masai occupied the Laikipia Plateau, the Purko Masai were at Naivasha, the Kaputiei in the Kidong Valley, and the Taramwe at Iriaini. The Dorobo, who were still the dominant tribe, occupied with the Kikuyu the present Kikuyu country.

With all these tribes the Somali or Galla lived in a state of chronic warfare.

The Laruma, a Kikuyu clan, and the Aiwa, a Dorobo clan, unable to hold out any longer, migrated. The former have, it is said, preserved to this day their tribal identity and customs, and are still to be found somewhere in the vicinity of Kilimanjaro§; the latter near Mombasa.‖

The remaining tribes appealed for assistance against their oppressors to a great medicine man called Supi (or, to give him his correct name, Supeet), the grandfather of Lenana, the present Masai chief.

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* The name Iriaini is said to be derived from W-Taramwe airiel, my Taramwe women. Taramwe is the name of the most important clan in this particular section of the Masai.

† Mr. Hollis informs me that the Segeju, who have intermarried with the Digo, a sub-tribe of the Wa-Nyika, have a tradition to the effect that they once lived on the Tana River.

‡ Barabio is the Kikuyu, [illegible] the Masai for Somali and Galla.

§ Possibly the Arusha, who live on Mount Meru in German East Africa.

‖ By Mombasa the up-country native often means the coast generally. According to Mr. Hollis the Wa-[illegible] call themselves, and are known to the Galla as, [illegible]; sing. [illegible].